

Compassionate
WARNING
AND
ADVICE
TO
ALL,
Especially to
Young Persons.

Being the Gift of the Author,
Richard Baxter.

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Compassionate
Warning and Advice
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C H A P. I.

T Here is no Man that ever understood the Interest of Mankind, of Families, Cities, Kingdoms, Churches, and of Jesus Christ, the King and Saviour, but he must needs know that the right Instruction, Education, and Sanctification of *Youth*, is of unspeakable Consequence to them all; and therefore I am urged in my Mind, by the greatness of the Case,

to add yet this Epistle to the younger Sort; which shall contain, I. The great Importance of the Case of Youth. II. How it stands with them in Matter of Fact. III. What are the Causes of their Sin and dangerous Degeneracy. IV. How great a Blessing Wise and Godly Youth are to themselves and others. V. How great a Plague and Calamity the Ungodly are. VI. What great Reason Ungodly Sensual Youth have presently to Repent and Turn to God. VII. Directions to them how to do it. VIII. And some Directions to Parents about their Education. And all must be with the Brevity of an Epistle.

C H A P. II.

To begin betimes to Live to God is of unspeakable Importance to yourselves.

FOR, 1. You were betimes solemnly Dedicated to God, as your God your Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier, by your Baptismal Vow; and as

that was a great Mercy, it obliged you to great Duty: You were capable in Infancy of that Holy Dedication and Religion; and your Parents were presently obliged as to Dedicate you to God, so to Educate you for God: And as soon as you are capable of Performance the Vow is upon your selves to do it. If your Childhood is not presently obliged to Holiness, according to your Natural Capacity, no doubt your Vow and Baptism should have been also delayed.

2. All your Time and Life is given you by God for one End and Use, and all is little enough; and will you alienate the very beginning, and be Rebels so soon?

3. The youngest have not Assurance of Life for a Day, or an Hour. Thousands go out of the World in Youth. Alas, the Flesh of Young Men is corruptible, liable to Hundreds of Diseases, as well as the Old. How quickly may a Vein break, and Cold seize on your Head and Lungs, and turn to an incurable Consumption? How quickly may a Fever, a Pleurisie, an Impostume, or one of a Thousand Accidents turn your Bodies to Corruption? And O that I knew how to make

you sensible how dreadful a Thing it is to die in an unholy State, and in the Guilt of any unpardoned Sin! An un-sanctified Soul, that hath lived here but to the Flesh and the World, will be but Fewel for the Fire of Hell, and the wrathful Justice of the most Holy God. And though in the Course of undisturb'd Nature Young Men may live longer than the Old, yet Nature hath so many Disturbances and Crosses, that our Lives are still like a Candle in a broken Lanthorn, which a blast of Wind may soon blow out. To tell you that you are not certain in an un-sanctified State, to be One Day or Hour more out of Hell, I expect will not move you so much as the Weight of the Case deserveth, because meer *Possibility* of the *greatest Hurt* doth not affect Men when they think there is *no Probability* of it. You have long been well, and long you hope to be so: But did you think how many Hundred Veins, Arteries, Nerves, must be kept constantly in Order, and all the Blood and Humours in due Temper; and how the stopping of One Vein, or Distemper of the Blood, may quickly end you, it would rather teach you to admire the merciful Providence

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dence of God that such a Body should be kept alive One Year.

4. But were you sure to live to Maturity of Age, alas, how quickly will it come? What haste makes Time? How fast do Days and Years roul on? Had I done no Service for God, that I could now look back upon, I should seem as if I had not lived. A Thousand Years, and One Hour, are all one (that is, nothing) when they are past. And every Year, Day and Hour of your Lives hath its proper Work: And how will you answer for it? Every Day offereth you more and more Mercies, and will you despise and lose them? If you were Heirs to Land, or had an Annuity which amounted but to an Hundred Pounds a Year, and you were every Day to receive a proportionable Part of it, or lose it, would you lose it through Neglect, and say, I will begin to receive it when I am old? Poor Labourers will work hard all the Day, that at Night they may have their Wages: And will you contemptuously lose your every Day's Mercies, your Safety, your Communion with God, your daily Blessings and his Grace, which you should daily beg, and may daily receive?

5. Either you will repent and live to God, or not; if not, you are undone for ever. Oh how much less miserable is a Dog, or a Toad, than such a Sinner! But if God will shew you so great Mercy, Oh how will it grieve you to think of the precious Time of Youth which you madly cast away in Sin! Then you will think, O what Knowledge, what Holiness might I then have got! What a comfortable Life might I have lived! O what Days and Years of Mercy did I cast away for nothing! Yea, when God hath given you the Pardon of your Sin, the Taste of his Love, and the Hopes of Heaven, it will wound your Hearts to think that you should so long, so unthankfully, so heinously offend so Good a God, and neglect so Merciful a Saviour, and trample upon Infinite Divine Love, for the Love of so base a fleshly Pleasure. That ever you should be so bad, as to find more Pleasure in sinning, than in living unto God.

6. And be it known to you, if God in Mercy convert and save you, yet the bitter Fruit of your youthful Folly may follow you in this World to the Grave. If you waste your Estate in Youth, you may

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may be poor at Age: If by Drinking, Gluttony, Idleness, or filthy Lust, you contract any uncurable Diseases in Youth, Repentance may not cure them till Death. All this might easily have been prevented if you had but had foreseeing Wisdom.

7. And if ever you think to be Men of any great Wisdom and Usefulness in the World, to your selves or others, your Preparations must be made in Youth. Great Wisdom is not got in a little Time.

8. And O what a dreadful Danger is it lest your youthful Sin become remediless, and Custom harden you, and Deceivers blind you, and God forsake you For your wilful Resistance of his Grace! God may convert old hardened Sinners: But how ordinarily do we find that Age doth but answer the Preparations of Youth, and the Vessel ever after savoureth of the Liquor which first thoroughly tainted it: And Men are but such as they learned to be and do at first. If you will be perfidious Breakers of your Baptismal Vows, it's just with God to leave you to your selves, to a deluded Understanding, to think Evil Good, and Good Evil,

to a seared Conscience, and a hardened Heart, and as past feeling, to work Uncleanness with Greediness, *Eph. 3. 18.* and to fight against Grace and your own Salvation till Death and Hell convince you of your Madness. O sport not with the Justice of a Sin-hating God! Play not with Sin, and with the unquenchable Fire! Forsaking God is the Way to be forsaken of him. And what is a forsaken Soul but a miserable Slave of Satan?

9. Yea, did you but know of what Moment it is to prevent all the heinous Sins that else you will commit, you would make haste to repent, though you were sure to be forgiven. Forgiveness maketh not Sin to be no Sin, or to be no Evil, no Shame, no Grief, to the Soul that hath committed it. You will cry out, O that I had never known it! To look back on such an ill-spent Life, will be no pleasant Thought. Repentance, though a healing Work, is bitter: Make not Work for it if you love your Peace.

10. And is it a small thing to you that you are all this while doing hurt to others? And drawing them to Sin, and plunging them into that dangerous Guilt, which

[II]

which can no Way be pardoned but by the Blood of Christ upon true Conversion? And when they have joined with you in Lust and fleshly Pleasure, it is not in your Power to turn them, that they may join with you in sound Repentance; and if not they must lye in Hell for ever: And can you make a Sport of your own and other Mens Damnation? But this leadeth me to the Second Point. I have shewed you of what vast Concernment it is to your selves to begin betimes a holy Life; I will next shew you of what Concernment it is to others.

C H A P. III.

Of what Publick Concernment the Quality of Youth is.

§ 1. **T**HE Welfare of the World is of far greater Worth than of any single Person; and he hath put off Humanity who doth not more earnestly desire it. If this World consisted but of one Generation, then to make that Generation

neration Wise and Good would be enough to make it a happy World: But it is not so. In Heaven, and in the future glorious Kingdom, there is neither Marrying, nor giving in Marriage, but they are as the Angels, in a fixed everlasting State; and one continued Generation maketh up the New *Jerusalem*: Being once holy and happy they are so for ever: But here it is not so. One Generation cometh, and another goeth: If the Father be as Wise as *Solomon*, the Son may be as Foolish as *Rehoboam*: O what a great Work it is to make a Man truly Wise and Good! How many Years Study doth it usually require? What Wisdom and Diligence in Teachers? What Teachableness and Diligence in Learners; and especially the Grace of God! And when all is done, the Man quickly dieth, and obtaineth his Ends in another World: But his Children are born as ignorant, and perhaps as bad as he was born: He can neither leave them his Knowledge, nor his Grace. They must have all the same Teaching, and Labour, and Blessing, as he had, to bring them to the same Attainments: The Mercy and Covenant of God taketh them into his Church, where they have great Advantages and Helps, and prom-
miseth

miseth them more Mercy for their Relation to a Faithful Parent, if he or they do make no Forfeiture of it: But as their Nature is the same with others, so their Actual Wisdom must come by God's Blessing on the use of the same Means, which are necessary to the Children of the worst Men. A Christian's Child is born with no more Knowledge than a Heathen's, and must have as much Labour and Study, to make him Wise.

§. 2. It is certain then that the Welfare of this World lyeth on a good Succession of the several Generations: And that all the Endeavours of One Generation with God's greatest Blessing on them will not serve for the Ages following: All must begin anew, and be done over again, or all will be as undone to the next Age: And it is not the least Blessing on the Faithful that their Faith and Godliness disposeth them to have a Care of Posterity, and to devote their Children wholly to God, as well as themselves, and to educate them in his Fear. If Nature had not taught Birds and Beasts to feed their Young, as well as to generate them, their Kind would be soon extinct. O what a Blessed World were it, if the Blessings of Men Famous for Wisdom

dom and Godliness were entailed on all that should spring from them, and if this were the common Case!

§. 3. But the Doleful Miseries of the World have come from the degenerating of good Mens Posterity. *Adam* hath his *Cain*, and *Noah* his *Cham*, and *David* his *Absalom*; *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, left not their like behind them. The present State of the Eastern Churches is a dreadful Instance. What Places on Earth were more honourable for Faith and Piety than *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, *Jerusalem*, *Constantinople*, *Ephesus*, *Philadelphia*, and the rest of these Great and Noble Countries; and those also strengthened with the powerfulest Christian Empire that ever was on Earth? And now they are Places of Barbarism, Tyranny, and Foolish Mahometanism, where the Name of Christ is made a Scorn, and the few Christians that keep up that Sacred Profession, by Tyranny kept in so great Ignorance, that, alas, the Vices of most of them dishonour their Profession as much as their Enemies Persecutions do.

And alas, were it not for the Name of a Pompous Christian Church, how plain an Instance would *Rome* be of the same

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same Degeneracy? And some Countries that received the Blessing of Reformation have revolted into the Darkeness of Popery. What a Change was in *England* by Queen *Mary's* Reign? And how many particular Cities and Towns are grown Ignorant, which in former Times were Famous for Religion?

§. 4. And on the other Side, when Piety hath successively as a River kept its Course, what a Blessing hath it proved? (But how rare is that?) And when Children have proved better than their Parents, it hath been the beginning of Welfare to the Places where they lived. How marvellously did the Reformation prevail in *Germany* in *Luther's* time, when God brought out of Popish Monasteries many Excellent Instruments of his Service? And Princes became Wise and Pious, whose Parents had been Blind or Impious? Godliness or Wickedness, Welfare or Calamity, follow the Changes and Quality of Posterity.

And Men live so short a Time, that the Work of Educating Youth aright is one half the great Business of Man's Life.

§. 5. Among the Ancient Sages of the World, the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and much more among the *Israelites*, the Care of Posterity, and Publick Welfare, was the great Thing which differenced the Virtuous and Laudable, from those of a Base, Selfish, Sensual Disposition. He was the Bravest Citizen of *Rome* that did most love, and best serve his Country: And he was the Saint among the Jews who most loved *Sion*, and the Security and Succession of its holy and peaceable Posterity. And the Christian Faith, and Hope, and Interest, doth lead us herein to a much higher Pitch, and to a greater Zeal for Publick Good, in following him that whipt out Prophaners from the Temple; even a Zeal of God's House, which eateth us up: It teacheth us by the Cross most effectually to Deny our selves, and to think nothing too Dear to part with to Edifie the Church of God, nor any Labour or Suffering too great for common Good. It teacheth us to pray for the *Hallowing of God's Name, the Coming of his Kingdom, and the Doing of his Will on Earth, as it is Done in Heaven, before our Daily Bread*, and any other Personal Interest of our own. Therefore the Families

ties of Christians should be as so many Schools, or Churches, to train up a Succession of Persons meet for the great Communicative Works which God calleth all Believers to in their several Measures: It is *eminently Teachers*, but it is also *all others* in their several Ranks, who must be the *Salt of the Earth*, and the *Lights of the World*. And indeed the Spirit of Holiness is so eminently the Spirit of Love to God and Man, that it inclineth every Sanctified Person to a Communicative Zeal, to make others Wise, and Good, and Happy.

§. 6. And God in great Mercy hath planted yet more deeply and fixedly the Natural Love of Parents to their Children, that it might be in them a Spring of all this Duty; so that though Fleshly Vice may make Men mistake their Childrens Good, as most ungodly Men do their own, and think that it consisteth in that which it doth not, yet still the general Desire of their Childrens Welfare, as well as of their own, is deeply rooted, and will work for their Welfare as soon as they well know wherein it doth consist. And God hath not given them this Love only for the Good
of

of the individual Children, but much more for the Commonwealth, and Church, that as exercised Soldiers make One Army, so many well Educated Children may make up One Peaceable and Holy Society.

§. 7. And accordingly it is much to be observed, that God hath not given Children a Natural Love and Submissiveness to Parents only for the Personal Benefit of their Provision and other Helps, but especially that hereby they may be teachable and obedient to those Instructions of their Parents, by which they may become Blessings in their Generations, and may conjunctly make up Wise and Holy Societies, Families, Churches, and Commonwealths. For these Ends it is that God hath bound you, as to reverence your Masters, Tutors and Pastors, so especially both to reverence and love your Parents, that you may be the more capable of their necessary Instruction and Advice.

By all this it is most evident that the great Means of the Welfare of the World must be the Faithful and Holy Endeavours of Parents, and the Willing Teachableness and Obedience of Children, that they may escape the Snares of Folly and

and fleshly Lusts, and may betimes
get that Wisdom and Love of Good-
ness, which may make them fit to be
Blessings to the Places where they
live.

C H A P. IV.

*How the Case standeth with our Youth in
Matter of Fact.*

§ 1. **T**Hrough the great Mercy of God
many Families are Sacred Nur-
series for Church and Kingdom; and
many Parents have great Comfort in the
Grace of God appearing in their Chil-
dren. From their early Childhood many
are of Humble, Obedient Dispositions,
and have a Love to Knowledge, and a
Love to the Word of God, and to those
that are Good and Virtuous Persons.
They have inward Convictions of the
Evil of Sin, and a fear of Sinning, and
a great dislike of wicked Persons, and a
great Love and reverend Obedience to
their Parents, and when they grow up
they diligently learn in Private, and in
Publick :

Publick: They increase in their Love to the Scriptures, and good Books, and to Godly Teachers, and godly Company; and God saveth them from Temptations, and worldly Deceits, and fleshly Lusts; and they live to God, and are Blessings to the Land, the Joy of their Friends, and exemplary and useful to those whom they converse with.

§ 2. But all, even Religious Parents, have not the like Blessing in their Children. 1. Some of them, though Religious otherwise, are lamentably careless of the Duty which they promised to perform (at Baptism) in the Education of their Children, and do but superficially and formally instruct them, and are too faulty as to the Example which they should give them, and seem to think that God must bless them, because they are theirs, and because they are Baptized, while they neglect their promised Endeavours. 2. And some Children, when they grow up, and are bound to resist Temptations, and to use God's appointed Means for their own Good, do wilfully resist God's Grace, and run into Temptations, and neglect, and wretchedly betray themselves, and forfeit the Mercies which they needed.

§ 3. In all my Observation God hath most blessed the Children of those Parents who have Educated them as followeth: 1. Those that have been particularly sensible what they promised for them in the Baptismal Vow, and made Conscience of performing it. 2. Those that have had more Care of their Souls than of their outward Wealth. 3. Those that have been most careful to teach them the Pravity of corrupted Nature by Original Sin, and to humble them, and teach them the Need of a Saviour, and his renewing as well as pardoning Grace, and to tell them the Work of the Spirit of Sanctification, and teach them above all to look to the inward State of their Souls. 4. Those that have most seriously minded them of Death, Judgment, and the Life to come. 5. Those that have always spoken of God with the greatest Reverence, Affection and Delight. 6. Those that have most wisely laboured to make all the Knowledge and Practice of Religion pleasant unto them, by the suitableness of Doctrines and Duties to their Capacity. 7. Those that have most disgraced Sin to them, especially base and fleshly Pleasures. 8. Those that have kept them from the Baits of Sen-

Sensuality, not gratifying their Appetites in Meats and Drink, to bring them to an unruly Habit; but used them to a Habit of Temperance, and Neglect of Appetite. 9. Those that have most disgraced Worldliness and Pride to them, and used them to low Things in Apparel and Possession, and told them how the Proud are hateful to God, and set before them the Example of a Crucified Christ, and opened to them the Doctrine of Mortification and Self-denial, and the great Necessity of true Humility. 10. Those that have been most watchful to know their Childrens particular Inclinations and Temptations, and apply answerable Remedies, and not carelessly leave them to themselves. 11. Those that have been most careful to keep them from ill Company; especially, (1.) Of wicked Youths, of their own Growth and Neighbourhood. (2.) And of tempting Women. 12. Those that have most wisely used them to the meetest Publick Teachers, and help them to remember and understand what they hear, especially the Fundamental Truths in the Catechism. 13. Those that have most wisely engaged them into the Familiarity and frequent Converse of some Suitable, Godly,

Godly, Exemplary Companions. 14. Those that have most conscionably spent the Lord's Days in Publick, and in their Families. 15. Those that have done all this, as with reverend Gravity, so especially with tender, endearing Love to their Children, convincing them that it is all done for their own Good; and that do not by imprudent Weaknesses, Ignorance, Passions, or Scandal, frustrate their own Endeavours. 16. Those that use not their Children as meer Patients, only to hear what their Parents say, but ingage them to constant Endeavours of their own, for their own Good; especially in the Reading of Scripture, and the most suitable Books, and meditating on them, and daily Personal Prayer to God. 17. Lastly, Those that pray most heartily and believingly for God's Grace, and his Blessing on their Endeavours, such Mens Children are usually blessed.

§. 4. But it is no wonder, where such Means are neglected, much more when Parents are ungodly, fleshly, worldly Persons, and perhaps Enemies to a holy Life, if the Children of such are ignorant, deluded, ungodly, and drown'd in fleshly Lusts; and, alas, it is the Multitude

itude of such, and their sad Conditions, which is the Occasion of my writing this Epistle.

§. 5. i. We see, to our Grief, that many Children are of a stupid and unteachable Disposition, and almost incapable of Instruction, who yet can as quickly learn to talk of common Matters as other Persons, and can as easily learn a Trade, or how to do any ordinary Business. And though some inconsiderate Persons overlook the Casualty of the more immediate Parents Sins, in such Judgments on their Children, as if it were only *Adam's Sin* that hurt them. I have elsewhere proved that this is their great and dangerous Mistake. As *David's Child* died for the Father's Sin, the Children of Gluttons, Drunkards, Fornicators oft contract such Bodily Distempers as greatly tend to stupify or further vitiate the Mind. And their Souls may have sad Additions to the common Human Pravity.

2. Accordingly many Children have more violent Passions, and carnal Desires than others, which run them into wicked Ways impetuously, as if they were almost Brutes, that had no Reason or Power to resist. And all Words and Corrections

are to them of little force, but they are as Blocks, that when you have said and done what you can, go away as if they had not heard you.

3. And some have Cross and Crooked Natures, addicted to that which is Naught; and the more, by how much the more you do contradict them: Froward and Obstinate, as if it were a desired Victory to them to overcome their Parents, and escape all that would make them Wise and Good: Dogged, Soure, Proud, Self-willed, and utterly Disobedient.

4. And too many have so great an Enmity and Averseness to all that is Holy, Spiritual and Heavenly, that they are weary to hear you talk of it, and you persuade them to learn to Read, to Pray, to Meditate, or Consider, as you persuade a sick Man to the Meat which he doth loath, or a Man to dwell with those that he hateth. They have no Appetite to such Things; no Pleasure in them; when you have said all of God, and of Christ, and Glory, they believe it not, they favour it not: They are Things above their Reach and Love, yea, Things against their Carnal Minds: You tire them worse than if you talk'd in a strange language to them, such Enmity is in the

Heart of corrupted Man to God and Heaven, till the Grace of the great Reconciler overcome it by a new Life, and Light, and Love.

5. And when Custom is added to all these Vicious Dispositions, alas, what Slaves and Drudges of Satan doth it make them! For Instance,

1. Some are so corrupted with the *Love of Sport*, that *Gaming* or *Stage Plays*, or one such Foolery or another, becometh so pleasant to them, that they can understand or believe nothing that is said against it by God or Man; their Diseased Phantasie hath so conquered Reason, that they cannot restrain themselves; but in their Callings and in Religious Exercises they are weary, and long to be at their Sports, and must be gone; neither God, nor Holiness, nor the Joys of Heaven, are half so sweet to their Thoughts as these are: For they have that Mark of Misery, 2 Tim. 3. 4. *They are Lovers of Pleasures more than Lovers of God.*

The same I say of *sinful Mirth*, and the Company which doth cherish it. Little do they believe Solomon, Eccles. 7. 3, 4. *It is better to go to the House of Mourning, than to go to the House of Feasting.*

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*Feasting, for that is the end of all Men,
and the Living will lay it to his Heart.
Sorrow is better than Laughter; for by
the Sadness of the Countenance the Heart
is made better: The Heart of the Wise
is in the House of Mourning, but the
Heart of Fools is in the House of Mirth.
It is better to hear the Rebuke of
the Wise, than for a Man to hear the
Song of Fools: For as the crackling of
thorns under a Pot, so is the Laughter of
Fools.*

It's true, that Mirth is very desirable
Nature: And God is not against it,
at much more for it, than Sinners will
believe: But it is a rational Mirth which
seemeth a rational Creature; and such
he can justifie, and as will make him
better, and tends to Felicity, and ever-
lasting Mirth; and not the causeless
Mirth of Mad Men, that set their House
on Fire, and then Laugh and Sing over
it; nor like the Mirth of a Drunken
Man, whose Shame exposeth him to
Contempt or Derision; nor any such Mirth as
leadeth a Man from God to Sin, and
keepeth him from the Way of Manlike
and Everlasting Joy, and prepareth for the
greatest Sorrows.

2. There are some so enslaved to their Appetites, that their Reason hath no Power to rule them; but, like Brutes, they must needs have what the Belly and Throat desireth: And if they be the Children of the Rich, who have always full and pleasant Food, constant Flesh pleasing, and true Gluttony, is taken for no Sin; and, like Swine, they do but *live to eat*, whereas they should but eat to live, and cheerfully serve God.

But it's never so dangerous as when it turneth to the *Love of Drink*; then the pleasing of the Throat and the pleasing of the Brain by Mirth going together, do so much corrupt the Appetite and Fantasie, that their Thoughts run after it, and Reason hath no Power to shut their Mouths, nor keep them from the House of Sin. Some Sin against an accusing Conscience, and under their Conviction and Terrors do drink on, which yet they could forbear if they knew there was Poison in the Cup. Some are more miserable, and have sinned themselves into a fearedness of Conscience, and past feeling, and perhaps into Infidelity, and a blinded Mind, perswading them that

There is no great Harm or Danger in the
 Sin, and that it is but some precise Peo-
 ple that make so great a Matter of it;
 and some that have Purposes to forsake
 the Sin, when Appetite stirs forget it all;
 and when Company enticeth, and when
 they see the Cup they have no Power
 to forbear. O what a pitiful Sight it is;
 to see Men in the Flower of Youth and
 Strength, when they should most rejoice
 in God and Holiness, to be still thirsty
 after a forbidden Pleasure, and hasting to
 the Tavern or Alehouse, as a Bird to the
 Snare of the Fowler, and sweetly and
 greedily swallowing the poisonous Cup
 which God forbiddeth! And that false
 Repentance which Conscience and Expe-
 rience force them to sometimes, is for-
 gotten the next Day, when the Tempta-
 tion is renewed: Yea, the *Throat-Mad-*
ness, and the *Merry* and *Belly-Devils*,
 are within them a continual Temptation,
 which the miserable Slaves cannot re-
 sist.

3. And these beastly, fleshly Sins, do
 usually make them weary of their Cal-
 lings, and of any honest Labour: The
 evil hath by this time got Possession of
 their Thoughts by the Biass of Delight
 and sinful Lust; and they are thinking

of Meat, or Drink, or Play, or merry Company, when they should be diligently at Work; and so Idleness becomes the Nursery of Temptation, and of all the other Vice, as well as a constant Sin of Omission, and loss of hasty precious Time. And Custom increaseth the Habits, and maketh them good for nothing, and like dead Men to all that Life is given them for, and only alive to prepare by Sin for endless Misery.

4. And usually *Pride* also takes its Part to make the Sin of *Sodom* in them complete, *Ezek. 16. 49. Pride, Fulness, and Idleness.* They that must be in the jovial Company must not seem Despicable among them, but must be in the Mode and Fashion whatever it cost, lest the Image of the Devil, and his Victory over them, should not be perfected if *Pride* were left out, how unreasonable soever.

5. And by this time they have (usually here amongst the Rich and Idle,) a further Step towards Hell to go, and yet a deeper Gulf to fall into; *Fleshly Lust* next entangleth them in *immodest Converse* with Women, and thence into *filthy Fornication*, and so they go on as an Ox to the Slaughter, and a Fool to the Correction.

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be Stocks, and know not that it is for
 their Lives. Prov. 7. 21, 22, 23. Till
 they mourn at last (perhaps) when Flesh
 and Body are consumed, and say, How
 have I hated Instruction, and my Heart
 despised Reproof, and have not obeyed the
 voice of my Teachers, nor inclined my
 Ears to them that instructed me? I was
 almost in all Evil, &c. Prov. 5. 12, 13,
 14. And 'tis well for the Wretches if
 this Repentance be true, and in time,
 that though the Flesh be destroyed, the
 Spirit may be saved: For Solomon saith,
 Prov. 2. 18, 19. Her House inclineth to
 Death, and her Paths to the Dead: None
 that go unto her return again, neither
 take they hold of the Paths of Life. God,
 doubt not, recovereth some, but the
 Case is dangerous: For though Age and
 Sickness cure Lust, usually before that
 the Conscience is seared and debauched,
 and they being past feeling, work Un-
 cleanness with Greediness, and forsaking
 God, are so forsaken by him, that all other
 Sin, Sensuality, and Enmity against a
 holy Life, prevaieth against them;
 and the unclean Devil lets in many
 more.

6. And when all these Sins have enslaved sensual Youths, they must have Money to maintain them; and if they have it not of their own, and be not the Sons of Great Men, that will maintain them in the Service of the Flesh, they must steal to get it, which usually is either by thievish borrowing when they cannot pay, or by robbing their Parents or Masters. If all the Masters in *London* knew what Thieves their Apprentices Vices are, for their own Sakes they would take greater Care to watch over them, and keep them from ill Company, Drunkenness and Plays, and would teach them to seek Pleasure in good Books, good Company, and serving God. Wisdom might have prevented this; but if the Thorn be got into the Conscience, it must come out, and if the Poison be swallowed, It must come up, what Gripes soever the Vomit cost. There is no playing with Hell fire, nor jesting with the Justice of the most Holy God. One penitent Review of fleshly Lust, and sinful Pleasure, and Falshood, and Deceit, (though wholesome if true and timely,) will turn it all into Gall and Wormwood; for the end of sinful Mirth is Sorrow.

7. And too many there be that escape the gross and disgraceful Part of the foresaid Sensuality and Unrighteousness; that yet do but chuse another Idol, and set themselves wholly to rise in the World, and Riches, Preferment, and Honour, have almost all their Hearts and Care: That have no Delight in God and Holiness; nor doth the State of their Souls, or the Thought of their Everlasting State, affect them in any Measure, according to its unspeakable Weight, nor so much as these Shadows which they pursue. And when great Travellers, that have seen much of the World, and Old Men, and Dying Men, that have had all that it can do, are forced by Experience to call all *Vanity* and *Vexation*; unexperienced Youth, that are taken up with the Hopes of long Prosperity, and Provision for all that the Flesh desireth, have other Thoughts of it, and will not know that it is deceitful Vanity, till it hath deceived them of their chiefest Hope and Treasure. And when they have overtaken the Shadow which they pursue so greedily, they find it what others have done before them, the sweeter the more dangerous, and the parting will be the more bitter. Whereas had they sought first God's King-

dom and its Righteousness, and Six Days laboured in Obedience to God, and referred all Corporal Blessings to Spiritual Uses, and Everlasting Ends, taking them as from God, to serve him by them, they might have had enough as an Overplus to their satisfying Treasure.

C H A P. V.

How sad a Case it is that I have described.

I Have told you the very lamentable Case of too many Young Men, especially Rich Mens Sons; I told you before of what Concern the State of Youth is to themselves and others. From thence (and alas from sad Experience) it's easie to gather the dolefulness of the Case of those that are drowned in fleshly Lust, and have sinned themselves into the Guilt and Danger which I have described. But I will name some Parts of the Misery more particularly again.

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§. 1. Review the Second Chapter, and think what a doleful Case this is to *your* *Selves*.

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1. Do you not know that you are not Beasts, but Men? That have Reason given them to Know, and Love, and Serve their Maker? And how sad is it to see a Man forget all this, and wilfully brutifie himself. Were the Poet's Fictions true of Men turned into Trees, and Birds, and Beasts, how small were the Misery in Comparison of yours? But for a reasonable Creature to subject himself to fleshly Appetite, and wilfully degrade his Soul to the Rank of Brutes, is worse than if he had been made with the Body, and the unreasonableness of Brutes. Are you capable of no better Things than these?

§. 1.

§. 2. And what an odious Thing is it, when God hath chosen you out of the World to be Members of his Visible Church, and given you the great Privilege of early Entrance into his Holy Covenant, and wash'd you in the Laver of Visible Regeneration, and you are vow'd to Christ, renouncing the Lusts of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, that you might follow a Crucified Christ in the Way of Holiness to Everlasting Life, that

that you should so soon prove false, perfidious Traitors and Rebels against him that is your only Hope, and by Wickedness and Covenant-breaking make your Sin greater than that of Infidels, Turks and Heathens, that never were taken into the Church and Covenant of Christ, nor ever broke the Vows which you have broken, nor so cast away the Mercies which you had received.

§. 3. And what a doleful Case is it, that so much of your Minds, and Love, and Delight, which were all made for God, should be so mis-employed, even in your Strength, when they should be most Vigorous, and all worse than cast away on Filth and Folly? If your Souls be more worth than your Money, it is more Folly and Loss to mis-employ and abuse your Souls, your Reason, Love, and your Delight, than to abuse or cast away your Money. And what a Traitor or Murderer deserveth, that would give his Money to hire one to kill the King, or his Neighbour, I suppose you know; and what deserveth he that will use not only his Money, but himself, his Soul, his Thoughts, his Love, his Desire and Pleasure, against the most Glorious God that made him? That you cannot hurt him is

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no Thanks to you; while you break his
Laws, and deny him your Love and Duty,
and love more that one Thing which only
he hateth, and will never be reconciled

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§. 4. And how doleful a Cafe is it,
that all the Care, and Love, and Labour,
of your Parents, Masters, and Teach-
ers, should be loft upon you? God hath
made all this their great Duty for your
Good; and will you despise God and
them, and wilfully for nothing reject it
all? Shall all the Pain of a Child-bearing
Mother, and all her Trouble and Labour
to breed you up, and all your Parents
Care to provide for you, be but to breed
up a Slave for the Flesh, the World, and
the Devil, and a Firebrand for Hell? Shall
godly Parents Prayers for you, and
Teaching and Counsel of you, and all
their Desire and Care for your Salva-
tion, be despised by you, and all for-
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§. 5. And how doleful a Cafe is it,
that so much of so short a Life should be
lost, and a Thousand times worse than
lost, even turned into Sin, to prepare for
Misery, when alas the longest Life is
little enough for our Important Work,
and

and quickly gone, and the Reckoning and Judge are hard at Hand? All the Wealth, Wit or Power, in the World cannot bring or buy you back one Hour of all that precious Time which you now so basely cast away. O how glad would you be of a little of it e'er long on the Terms that now you have it, when you lye Dying, and perceive that your Souls are unready to appear before a Righteous God! Then O for One Year more of precious Time! O that you knew how to call again the Time which you cast away on Sin! You will then perceive with a terrified Conscience that Time was not so little worth as you once thought it, nor given you for so base a Work; yea, if God in Mercy bring you hereafter to true Conversion, O how it will wound your Hearts to think how much of your Youth was so madly cast away, while your God, your Souls, and Everlasting Hopes, were all neglected and despised!

§. 6. And alas, if you should be cut off in that unholy, miserable Estate, no Heart on Earth can sufficiently bewail your Case! How many Thousand die Young, that promised themselves longer Pleasure in Sin, and Repentance after it?

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O foolish Sinners! Cannot you so long borrow the Use of your Reason as to think seriously whither you must go next? Do you never think when the Small-Pox, or a Feaver, hath taken away one of your Companions, whither it is that his Soul is gone? Have you your Wit for nothing but to taste the Sweetness of Drink or Lust, which is as pleasant to a Dog or Swine as to you? O little do you know what it is to die! What it is for a Soul to leave the Body, and enter into an endless World! To come to Judgment for all his Sins, and all his ill-spent Days and Hours, and for chusing the Pleasures of a Swine before Heaven, and the Pleasures of a Saint. Little know you what it is for Devils presently to take away to Hell a wretched Soul, which they have long deceived. I tell you, the Thought of appearing before God, and Christ, and Angels, in another World, and entring on an endless State, is so dreadful, even to many that have spent their Lives in Holy Preparation, and are indeed in a safe Condition, that they have much ado to overcome the Terror of Death. O then in what a safe is a wicked, unpardoned, unprepared

red Wretch, when his guilty Soul must be torn from his Body, and dragged in Terror to hear its Doom, and so to the dreadful Execution? Sinners! Is this a light Matter to you? Doth it not concern you? Are you not here Mortal? Do you not know what Flesh is, and what a Grave is? And are not your abused Souls Immortal? Are you so mad as to forget this? Or so bad as not to believe it? Will your not believing it make void the Justice and the Law of God, and save you from that Hell, which only believing could have saved you from? Will not the Fire burn you, or the Sea drown you, if you can but run into it Drunk or Winking? Is *Feeling, remediless Feeling*, easier than *Believing* God in Time? Alas! What should your Believing Friends do to save you? They see by Faith whither you are posting: They foresee your Terrible future and undone Case, and fain, if possible, they would prevent it; but they cannot do it without you. If you will not consent and help your selves it is not the holiest nor wisest Friends in the World that can help you. They would pull you out of the Fire in Fear, and out of the Mouth of the roaring Lion, but you will not be delivered! They call and

must cry to you, *O fear God, and turn to him*
while there is Hope, and you will not
 let Conscience and Reason be awaken-
 ed; but those that go asleep to Hell
 will be past sleeping there for ever.
 Do you not run not madly into the Everlasting
 Fire!

§. 7. And indeed your sleepy Security
 and Presumption doth make your Case
 more dangerous in itself, and more piti-
 ful to all that know it. O what a Sight
 'twould be to see a Man go merry and laughing
 towards Damnation, and make a Jest of
 his own undoing? To see him at the
 brink of Hell, and will not believe it?
 Like a Mad Man boasting of his Wit, or
 a Drunken Man of his Sobriety.

But because I touch'd much of this
 in the Second Chapter, I will pass by
 the rest of your own Concerns, and a
 little further consider how sad the Case
 of such wretched Youths is also unto
 their Parents.

§. 8. And if Parents be Wise and God-
 ly, and understand such Childrens Case,
 what a Grief must it needs be to their
 hearts to think that they have Begot
 and Bred up a Child for Sin and Hell,
 and cannot make him willing to prevent
 it? To see their Counsel set at nought,
 their

their Teaching lost, their Tears despised, and an obstinate Lad seem wiser to himself than all his Teachers, even when he is swallowing the Devil's Bait, and cruelly murdering his own Soul.

§. 9. But if they be wicked Parents and as bad themselves, the Misery is far greater, though they yet feel it not: For

1. As the Thief on the Cross said to his Companion, *Luke 23. 40, 41. Thou art in the same Condemnation, and we suffer justly, for we receive the due Reward of our Deeds.* Wicked Parents, and wicked Children, are in the same Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniquity! They are joined together, and they must suffer forever together, if true Faith and Conversion do not prevent it.

2. And it is their Wickedness which was much of the Cause of their Children's Sin and Misery: And their own deep Guilt will be more to them than the Children's Suffering: God and Conscience will say to them e'er long, [*O cruel Parents! That had no Mercy on your Children, or your selves! What did Nature teach you to love more than your selves and your Children? And would you so fully and obstinately be the Ruin of both? You would not have done as the Mad Idol*

ers, that offer'd their Children in Fire
 to Moloch; and will you offer them by Sin
 to Satan, and to Hell? Had a Serpent stung
 them, or a Bear devoured them, they had
 done but according to their Nature: But
 was it natural in you to further their
 Damnation? This was Work too bloody
 for a Cannibal, too cruel for an Enemy;
 sifter for a Devil than a Father or Mo-
 ther. As your Child had from you his
 vicious Nature, it was your Part to
 have endeavour'd his Sanctification and
 Recovery: You should have taught him be-
 time to know the Corruption of his Na-
 ture, and to seek and beg the Grace of
 Christ; to know his God, his Duty, the
 Evil of Sin, the Danger of Temptations,
 and his Everlasting Hopes and Fears:
 You should have taught him to know what
 Man hath done against himself, by disobey-
 ing and departing from his God, and what
 Jesus Christ hath done for his Redemption,
 and what he himself must do to be saved:
 You should have taught him early how to live,
 and how to die, and what to seek, and what
 to shun: You should have given him the Ex-
 ample of a Holy and Heavenly Mind and
 Life: You should have watch'd over him for
 his Safety, and unweariedly instructed him
 for his Salvation: But you led him the
 Way

Way to despise God's Word, and set light by Christ, and Holiness, and Heaven, to hate Instruction and Reproof, to spend the Lord's Day in Idleness or Worldly Vanity, and to seek first the World, and the Prosperity of the Body, and glut the Flesh with sinful Pleasure.

He that is once a Slave to Satan and his fleshly Lust, is ready for Preferment, or a Reward, to be a Slave to the Lust of any other. He that is false to his God and Saviour, after his Baptismal Vows, is unlike to be true to his Country, or his King, if he have but the Bait of a strong Temptation: And he that will sell his Soul, his God, and Heaven, for a Whore, or for to please his Appetite, it's like will not stick to betray Church or State, or his dearest Friend, for Provision to satisfy these Lusts. Can you expect that he should love any Man better than himself? Will he suffer much for God or his Country who will Sell Heaven for nothing? An Evil Tree bringeth forth Evil Fruit. If he hath the Heart of an *Achan*, a *Gehazi*, an *Achitophel*, no wonder if he hath their Actions and their Reward. If he be a Thief, and bear the Bag, no wonder if *Judas* Sell his Master.

C H A P. VI:

The Joyful State and Blessing of good Children to themselves and others.

1. **F**ROM what is said, Chap. 2, and 5, it's easie to gather how joyful a Case to themselves, and what a Blessing to Parents and others, it is, when Children betime are sober, wise, and godly, and obedient. The difference doth most appear at Age, and when they come to bring forth to themselves and others the Fruits of their Dispositions: and the End and Life to come will shew the greatest difference: But yet even here, and that betime, the difference is very great.

§. 2. I. As to themselves: How blessed a State is it to be quickly delivered from the Danger of Damnation, and God's Displeasure, that they need not lye down and rise in Fear, lest they be in Hell when ever Death removeth em from the Body? Can one too soon be ont of so dreadful a state? Can one that is in a House on fire, or fall'n into the Sea, make too much haste to be deliver'd? If a Man deep in Debt be restless till it be paid, and glad when

when it is discharged; if a Man in Danger of Sickness, or a condemning Sentence of the Judge, be glad when the Fear of Death is over; how glad should you be to be safe from the great Danger of Damnation? And till you are sanctified by Grace you are far from Safety.

§. 3. And if a Man's Sickness, Pain or Distraction, be a Calamity, the Cure of which brings Ease and Joy, how much more Ease and Joy may it bring to be cured from all the grievous Maladies of reigning Sin? Sanctification will cure your Minds of Spiritual Blindness and Madness; that is, of damnable Ignorance, Unbelief and Error: It will cure your Affections of idolatrous, distracting, carnal Love; of the Itch of Fleshly Desires or Lusts; of the Feaver of revengeful Passions, and malignant Hatred to Goodness and good Men; and of self-vexing Envy and Malice against others; of the greedy Worm of Covetousness, and the drunken Desire of ambitious and imperious Minds: It will cure your Wills of their fleshly Servitude and Biass, and of that mortal Backwardness to God and Holy Things, and that sluggish Dulness and Lothness to chuse and do what you are convinced must be done: It will

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make good Things easie and pleasant to you; so that you will no more think you have need to beg Mirth from the Devil, or steal it from Sin, as if God, Grace and Glory, had none for you : But it will be so easie to you to love and find Pleasure in the Bible and good Books, in good Company and good Discourse, in Spiritual Meditations and Thoughts, in Holy Sermons, Prayers and Church Communion and Sacraments, even in Christ, in God, and the Fore-thoughts of Heavens, that you will be sorry and asham'd to think that ever you forsook such joys for Fleshly Pleasure, and defiled your Souls with filthy and forbidden Things.

§. 4. And certainly you cannot too soon attain the Delights of Faith, and Hope, and Love of Holy Knowledge and Communion with God and Saints: You cannot too soon have the great Blessing of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and live Night and Day in Peace of Conscience, in Assurance that all your Sins are pardon'd, and that you are the adopted Sons of God, and Heirs of Heaven, sealed by his Spirit, accepted in your Prayers, welcome to God thro' Christ, and when you die shall be with him:

It will make

when it is discharged; if a Man in Danger of Sickness, or a condemning Sentence of the Judge, be glad when the Fear of Death is over; how glad should you be to be safe from the great Danger of Damnation? And till you are sanctified by Grace you are far from Safety.

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him:

him : Can you make too great haste from the Folly and Filth of Sin, and the Danger of Hell, into so safe and good State as this?

§. 5. And it will be a great Comfort to you thus to find at Age and Use of Reason that your Baptismal Blessings ceased not with your Infancy by your own Rejection; but that you are now by your own Consent, in the Bond of God's Covenant, and have a Right to all the Blessings of it, which the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood will confirm as you had your Entrance by your Parents Consent and accepted Dedication : For the Covenant of Grace is our certain Charter for Grace and Glory.

§. 6. And is it not a Joy to you to be your Parents Joy? To find them love you not only as their Children, but as God's?

§. 7. And O what a Mercy will you find it when you come to Age and Business in the World! 1. That you come with a clear Conscience; not clogg'd with terrified and shamed with the Sins of your Youth. 2. And that you come not utterly unfurnished with the Knowledge of Righteousness and Vertue, which you must make use of in every Condition all your Lives.

at haſte §. 8. II. And you that are Young Men
and the ſcarce conceive what a Joy a wiſe and
good godly Child is to his wiſe and godly Pa-
rents! Read but *Prov.* 10. 1. and 13. 1. and
Comfor 2, 25. and 19. 13, 26. and 27. 11. and
Uſe of 15, 19, 24, &c. The Prayers and In-
Bleſſings of your Parents are comfortable
by you them when they ſee the happy Fruit
are now and Answer.

Bond of §. 9. III. And O what a Mercy is it to
ht to all church and State to have our Poſterity
cramen love better than we have been, and do
confirm ed more Service than we have done,
r Parents take Warning by our Faults to avoid
For the like?

Charter It is theſe that are God's Children, as
ell as ours, that are the Bleſſing ſo often
ou to be mentioned in the Scripture, who will, as
em love the *Rechabites*, obey their Father's whole-
, but alſo Counſels, rather than their Luſts
d carnal Companions, and God before
will you: *Who walk not in the Counſel of the Un-
nd Buſily, nor ſtand in the Way of Sinners,
ou comer ſit in the Seat of the Scornful: But
clogg'd their Delight is in the Law of the Lord,
Sins of and in that Law they meditate Day and
ome neight, Pſal. 1. Lo, ſuch Children are
nowledge Heritage of the Lord; ſuch Fruit of the
ich you ſomb is his Reward. They are as Ar-
ition alſo in the Hand of a mighty Man: Happy*

is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the Enemies in the Gate, Psal. 127. 3, 4, 5. Were it not for wise and godly Children to succeed us, Religion and Peace, and all Publick Good, would be but as we frail Mortals are, like the Grass or Flowers of a few Days or Years continuance; and the Difference between a Church and no Church, between a Kingdom of Christians and of Infidels, would be but like the Difference between our Waking and our Sleeping Time; so short as would make it the less considerable.

C H A P. VII.

Undeniable Reasons for Repentance and speedy Amendment of those that have lived a fleshly and ungodly Life: By way of Exhortation.

§. I. **A**ND now the Commands of God the Love of my Country and the Church, the Love of Piety, true Pro-
spirit

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 Mortals
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 the Dis-
 Church,
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 make in
 perity and Peace, and the Love of Man-
 kind, even of your own Souls and Bo-
 dies, do all command me to become once
 more an earnest Suitor to the Youth of
 this Land, especially of *London*, who
 have hitherto miscarried, and lived a
 fleshly sinful Life. Thousands such as
 you are dead in Sin, and past our Warn-
 ing, and past all Hope and Help for ever.
 Thousands that laugh'd at Judgment
 and Damnation, are now feeling that
 which they would not believe. By the
 great Mercy of God it is not yet the Case
 of you who read these Words; but how
 soon it may be, if you are yet un sanctified,
 you little know: Oh that you knew
 what a Mercy it is to be yet alive, and
 after so many Sins and Dangers, to have
 one to warn you, and offer you Salva-
 tion, and to be yet in Possibility, and in
 State of Hope! In the Name of Christ
 I most earnestly entreat you a little
 while try to use your Reason, and use it
 seriously, in retir'd, sober Consideration,
 till you have first well perus'd the whole
 Course of your Lives, and remembred
 what you have done, and how; till you have
 thought what you have got or lost by
 sinning; and why you did it; and whe-
 ther it was justifiable Reason which led
 you

you to it, and such as you will stand to in your sober Thoughts; yea, such as you will stand to before God at last. Consider seriously what comes next, and whither you are going, and whether your Life have fitted you for your Journey's End, and how your Ways will be review'd e'er long, and how they will appear to you, and taste at Death, Judgment, and in the World to come: Hold on, and think soberly a little while what is in your Hearts, and what is their Condition; what you most love, and what you hate; and whether God or sinful Pleasure be dearer and more delightful to you; and how you stand affected and related to the World that you are very near: Sure Reason would be Reason if you would but use it; sure Light would come in if you would not shut the Windows, and draw the Curtains on you, and rather chuse to sleep in Darkness. Is there nothing within you that grudgeth at your Folly, and threateneth you for being wilfully besides your selves? If you would but spend one half Hour in a Day or a Week in sober thinking whither you are going, and what you have done, and what you are, and what you must shortly see and be, how could you chuse

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but be deeply offended with your selves for living like Men quite void of Understanding, against your God, against your selves, against all the Ends and Obligations of Life, and this for nothing?

But it may be the Distinctness of your Consideration may make it the more effectual: And if I put my Motives by way of Questions will you consider them till you have well answer'd them all?

§ 2. *Quest. 1.* Are you not fully convinc'd that there is a God of infinite Power, Knowledge and Goodness, who is the perfect Governour of all the World? God forbid that any of you should be so bad, so mad, as seriously to doubt of this, which the Devils believe, while they would draw you to unbelief. To doubt of a perfect governing God, is to wink and doubt whether there be a Sun; to stop your Ears against the notorious Testimony of Heaven and Earth, and every Creature: You may next doubt whether there be any Thing, if you doubt of God; for Atoms and Shadows are hardlier perceiv'd with certainty, than the Earth, the Heavens, and Sun.

Quest. 2. And if you believe that there is a governing God, do you not believe that he hath governing Laws or Notifica-

tions of his Will; and that we owe this God more full, more absolute, exact Obedience, than can be due to any Prince on Earth; and greater Love than to our dearest Friend, he being infinitely Good, and Love itself? Can you owe more to your Flesh, or to any, than to your God that made you Men, by whom you have Life, and Health, and Time, and all the Good that ever you received? And can you give him too much Love and Obedience? Or can you think that you need to fear being Losers by him? And that your faithful Duty should be in vain?

Quest. 3. Is it God that needeth you, or you that need him? Can you give him any Thing that he wants? Or do you want what he hath to give? Can you live an Hour without him? Or be kept without him from Pain, Misery or Death? Is it not for your own Need, and your own Good, that he requireth your Service? Do you know what his Service is? It is thankfully to receive his greatest Gifts; to take his Medicines to save your Souls; to feast on his prepared Comforts. He calls you to far better and needfuller Obedience for your selves, than when you command your Child to take his Meat, or wear his Cloaths; or when he is Sick

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to take a necessary Remedy. And is such Obedience to be refused?

Quest. 4. Hath not Nature taught you to love your selves? Surely you cannot be willing to be Damned? Nor be indifferent whether you go to Heaven or Hell? And can you believe that God would set you on that which would do you hurt, and that the Devil is your Friend, and would save you from him? Can you believe that to please your Throat and Lust till Death snatch away your Souls to Judgment, is more for your own Good than to live here in Holiness, and the Love of God, and hereafter to live for ever in Glory? Do you think you have lived as if you truly loved your selves, or as Self-destroyers? All the Devils in Hell, or Enemies on Earth, could never have done so much against you, as by your Sensuality, Ungodliness and Sloth, you have done against your selves. Oh poor Sinner, as ever thou wouldst have Mercy from God in thy Extremity, be entreated to shew some Mercy on thy self!

Quest. 5. Hath not Nature deeply taught all the World to make a great Difference between *Vertue* and *Vice*, between Moral Good and Evil? If the Good and Bad do not greatly differ, what makes all

Mankind, even the Sons of Pride, to be so impatient of being called or accounted Bad, and love to be accounted Wise and Good? How tenderly do most Men bear Reproof, or to hear that they do Amis? To be called a wicked Man, a Liar, a perjured Man, a Knave, how ill is it taken by all Mankind? This certainly proveth that the Conscience of the great Difference between the Good and Bad is a common natural Notice. And will not God make a greater Difference, who better knoweth it than Man?

Quest. 6. If God had only commanded you Duty, even a holy, righteous and sober Life, and forbidden you the contrary, and had only bid you seek Everlasting Happiness, and made you no Promise of it, should you not in Reason seek it cheerfully in Hope? Our Folly leadeth us to do much in vain; but God setteth no Man on any vain Employment: If he do but bid you resist Temptation, mortifie Lust, learn his Word, pray to him, and praise him, you may be sure it is not to your Loss; a Reward you may be sure of, if you knew not what it will be: Yea, if he set you upon the hardest Work, or to pass the greatest Danger, or serve him at the dearest Rate, or lose your Estate for him, and Life itself, what

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what Reason can fear being Losers by obeying God? Yea, the dearest Service hath the greatest Reward: But when he hath moreover ascertained your Reward by a Promise, a Covenant, sworn and sealed by his Miracles, by Christ's Blood, by his Sacraments, by his Spirit, if yet you will be ungodly because you cannot trust him you have no Excuse.

Quest. 7. Do you know the Difference between a Man and a Brute? Brutes have no Capacity to think of a God, and a Saviour, and a Life to come, and to know God's Law, and study Obedience, and fear Hell and Sin, nor Reason to rule their Appetites and Lusts, nor any Hope or Joy in foreseen Glory; but Man is made capable of all this: And can you think God maketh such Noble Faculties in vain? Or should we live like Brutes that have none such?

Quest. 8. Do you not certainly know that you must die? All the World cannot hinder it; you must die: And is it not *near*, as well as *sure*? How swift is Time? Oh! How quickly shall we all be at our Race and Warfare's End? And where then is the Pleasure of Pride, and Appetite, and Lust? Neither the dismal Carcass, nor the Dust or Bones, retain or

taste it: And alas, the unconverted Soul must pay for it for ever. And can you think that so short a brutish Pleasure, that hath so sure and sad an End, is worthy the Grieving of your Friends, the Offending God, the Hazard of your Souls, the Loss of Heaven, and the Suffering of God's Justice in Hell for ever? O foolish Sinners! I beseech you think in Time how bad a Bargain you are making. O what an Exchange! For a filthy Lust or fleshly Pleasure to Sell a God, a Saviour, a Comforter, a Soul, a Heaven, and all your Hopes?

Quest. 9. If the Devil or Deceivers should make you doubt whether there be any Judgment and Life to come, should not the meer *Possibility* and *Probability* of such a Day and Life be far more regarded by you than all fleshly Pleasure, which is certainly short and base. Did you ever hear a Man so mad as to say, *I am sure there is no Heaven or Hell for Souls?* But you are sure that your Flesh must rot in a dark Grave; you are sure that Death will quickly put an End to all that this World can afford you; House and Land, and all that now deceive poor Worldlings, will be nothing to you; no more than if you had never seen them, save the terrible Reckoning

ing that the Soul must make. Sport, and Mirth, and Meat, and Drink, and filthy Lusts, are ready all to leave you to the final Sentence of your Judge; and is not even an *uncertain Hope of Heaven* more worth than *certain transitory Vanity*? Is not an uncertain Hell to be more feared and avoided than the forsaking of these certain Trifles and Deceits? Much more when God hath so certainly revealed to us the Life to come.

Quest. 10. Is it a wise and reasonable Expectation, that the Righteous God should give that Man Everlasting Glory, who will not leave his Whores, his Drunkenness, or the basest Vanity, for all his Love, and for all his Mercies, for the Sake of Christ, nor for the Hopes of all this Glory? Heaven is the greatest Reward of Holiness, and of the diligent and patient Seekers of it; Heaven is the greatest Gift of the great Love of God; and can you believe that he will give it to the Slaves of the Devil, and to contemning wilful Rebels? May not you next think that the Devils may be saved? If you say that God is Merciful, it's most true; and this will be the unconverted Man's Damnation, that he would for a base Lust offend so Merciful a God, and Sell
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Everlasting Mercy for nothing, and abuse so much Mercy all his Life: Abused and Refused Mercy will be the Fewel to feed the Flames of Hell, and torment the Conscience of the Impenitent for ever. Doth not God know his own Mercy better than you do? Can he not be Merciful, and yet be Holy and Just? Is the King Unmerciful if he make use of Goals and Gallows for Malefactors? It's Mercy to the Land to destroy such as would destroy others. The Bosom of Eternal Love is not a Place for any but the Holy! The heavenly Paradise is not like *Mahomet's*, a Place of Lust and Sensual Delights. You blaspheme the most Just and Holy God if you make him seem indifferent to the Holy and the Unholy, to his Faithful Servants, and to the Despisers of his Grace.

Quest. 11. If there were any Possibility that unsanctified Souls should be sanctified and saved in another World, is it not a Madness to cast Everlasting Life upon so great Uncertainty or Improbability, when we have Life, and Time, and Helps, to make our Salvation sure? God hath called you to give all Diligence to make it sure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. He hath made Infallible Promises of it to sanctified Believers: He.

He calleth you to examine and judge yourselves, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. And do you know the Difference between *Certainty* and *Uncertainty* in so great a Case? Oh, none can now sufficiently conceive what a Difference there is between a Soul that is going out of the Body with joyful Assurance that Christ will presently receive him, and a Soul that in the Guilt of Sin must say, I am going to an endless Life, and know not but it may be an endless Misery! I am here now, and know not but I may be presently with Devils that here deceived me. Just Fear of passing presently to Hell-fire is a dreadful Case, to be avoided above all earthly Sufferings, *Luke* 12. 4. and 14. 33. much more when God's Threatnings to the Impenitent are most sure.

Quest. 12. Do you think in your Hearts that you have more Pleasure, and sound Content, and Peace in your Sports or Riches, than true Believers have in God, in Christ, in a Holy Life, and the Hopes of Everlasting Glory? Judge but by the Cause. Is not the Love of that God that is the Lord of Life, and Death, and All, and the Pleasure of Pleasing him, and the Sense of Pardon and Mercy through Christ, and the firm Expectation of endless

less Joy, by a Promise of God, sealed by his Son, his Sacraments, and his Spirit; I say, is not all this Matter more worthy to rejoice a Soul than Money, and Meat, and Drink, and Lust? Have not you those secret Gripes of Conscience when you think that for all these Things you must come to Judgment, which much abateth the Pleasure of your Sin? Had you spent that Time in seeking first the Kingdom of God, and its Righteousness, and in honest, obedient labouring in your Callings, you need not have look'd back on it with the Gripes of an accusing Conscience. If you see a true Believer sorrowful, it is not for serving and obeying God, or being holy, and hating Sin; but for serving God no better, and hating Sin no more.

Quest. 13. Have you not oft secret Wishes in your Hearts, that you were in the Case of those Persons that you judge to be of the most holy and heavenly Hearts and Conversations? Do you not think they are in a far safer and better Case than you? Unless you are forsaken to blindness of Mind it is certainly so. And doth not this shew that you chuse and follow that which is worse, when your Consciences tell you it is worse,

worse, and refuse that which your Consciences tell you is best? But it is not such sluggish Wishes that will serve; to lye still, and live idle, and wish your selves as Rich as the Industrious, is not the Way to make you so.

Quest. 14. At least, if you have no such Wishes now, do you not think that you shall not wish it at Death or Judgment? Do not your Consciences now tell you that you shall shortly wish, O that I had hated sinful Pleasure! O that I had spent my short Life in obeying and trusting God! Will you not say with *Balaam*, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his?* O that I were in the Case of those that mortified the Flesh, and lived to God, and laid not up their Treasure on Earth, but in Heaven? And why chuse you not now that which you know you shall deeply wish that you had chosen?

Quest. 15. I take it for granted, that your merry, and sensual, and worldling Tempters and Companions deride all this, and persuade you to despise it, as if it were but needless, melancholy, troublesome Talk: But tell me, do you think in Conscience that it is sound Reason that they give you? And such as should
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satisfie a sober Man that careth what becomes of his Soul for ever? As *Elias* said to the *Israelites*, *Why halt you between Two Opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; if Baal be God, follow him.* If Money, Preferment, Drink and Lust be best, take it; but if God, Heaven, Christ, Faith, Hope and Holiness, be best, at your Peril refuse them not, and halt no longer. I suppose you sometime think of the Case, (or else you are dead in Sin,) I pray you tell me, or tell your selves, *which Cause seemeth best upon the deepest Thoughts and Consideration?* But if you will take the Laughter or Scorns of ignorant Sots instead of Reason, and instead of sober Consideration, you are well worthy of the Damnation which you so wilfully chuse.

Quest. 16. But if you think highly of their Wit or Learning, who sin as you, and who encourage and deceive you, I pray you answer these Two Questions.

1. Which Side is Christ, and his Prophets, and Apostles, on? Which Side doth the Scripture speak for? Which Way went all the Saints whose Names are now honoured? Were they for the fleshly or the spiritual Life? Were they for the Love of Pleasures more than God? Doth

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Christ from Heaven teach you an earthly or a heavenly Choice and Life? Did he come to cherish Sin, or to destroy it, and save us from it? You can make no doubt of this if ever you read or heard the Bible. And,

2. Which do you think were the wiser and better Men, and worthy to be believed and followed? Whether Christ, and all his Apostles, and Saints, that ever were in the World to this Day, or the Drunkards, and Whoremongers, and Worldlings, who deride the Doctrine sent from Heaven? If there be a Heaven, is Drunkenness or Sobriety liker to be the Way to it? But if indeed you will take the Mocks of a swinish Sot to be wiser than God, than Christ, than Prophets and Apostles, and all that ever went to Heaven, and their Jeers to be more credible than all God's Word, what can a Man say to convince such Wretches with any Hope?

Quest. 17. I further ask you, *Have you not some secret Purposes hereafter to repent?* If not, alas, how far are you from it? And how forlorn is your Case? But if you have, Conscience is a Witness against you, that you chuse and live in that Case and Course which you know.

know is worst; were it not worst, you need not purpose to repent of it: And will you wilfully chuse known Evil, when the very Nature of Man's Will is to love Good?

Quest. 18. And if you believe that the Faithful are in a happier Case, than you, tell me *What hindereth yet but you may be like them*, and yet be happy as well as they? Is not Mercy and Salvation proclaimed and offered to you as freely as to them? Did any Thing make you so bad as you are, but your own Choice and Doing? And can any Thing yet hinder you from Pardon and Salvation, if you your selves were but truly willing? What if your Parents were bad, and bred you up amiss? God hath told you in *Ezek.* 18. and 33. that if you will but do your own Part yet, and take Warning, and avoid your Parents Sin, and give up your selves unfeignedly to him, he will save you whatever your Parents were. What if Princes, or Lords, or learned Men, should be your Tempters by Words or Example? None of them can force you to one Sin. God is greater and wiser than they, and more to be believed, and obeyed, and your Salvation is not in any of their Power. What if your Old Companions tempt you?

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you? They can but tempt you, they cannot constrain you to any Evil: All the Devils in Hell, or Men on Earth, cannot damn you, no, nor make you Sinners, if you do it not your selves. Refuse not Christ, and he will not refuse you; and when he is willing, if you be but willing, truly willing to be saved from Sin and Misery, and to have Christ, Grace and Glory, in the Use of the Means which God hath appointed you, neither Earth nor Hell can hinder your Salvation. Who but your selves keep you from forsaking the Company, House or Baits, which have deceived you? Who but your selves keep you from lamenting your Sin, and flying to Christ, and begging Mercy, and giving your selves to God? If you think that serious Christians are the Happiest, refuse not to be such your selves; it will be your own doing, your own wilful Obstinacy, if you perish. But of this I have already said more in my *Call to the Unconverted*.

Quest. 19. Dare you deliberately resolve or bargain to take your fleshly Pleasures for your Part, instead of all your Hopes of Heaven? I hope none of you are yet so mad. I think it is but few, if any, of the Witches that make so express a Bargain with the Devil; if they did,
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O how they would tremble when they see their Glass almost run out, and Death at Hand! If you dare not make such a Bargain in plain Words, O do not do the same in the Choice of your Hearts, and the Practice of your Lives, and deceive your selves by thinking that you do it not when you do? It is God, and not you, that maketh the Conditions of Salvation and Damnation. If you chuse that Life which God hath told us is the Condition of Damnation, and finally refuse that Life which God hath made the Condition of Salvation, it will in Effect be all one as to chuse Damnation, and refuse Salvation. He that chuseth deadly Poison, or refuseth his necessary Food, chuseth Death, and refuseth Life in Effect. God hath said, *If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die; but if by the Spirit you mortifie the Deeds of the Body you shall live.* Rom. 8. Christ tells you, that unless you are Born again and Converted you cannot enter into his Kingdom, *John 3. 3. 5. Matth. 18. 3.* and that *without Holiness none shall see God*; refuse these, and chuse the World, and sinful Pleasures, and you refuse Salvation, and shall have no better than you chuse. What you judge best chuse resolvedly, and do not cheat your selves.

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Quest. 20. Have you no natural Love to your Parents, or your Country? O what inhuman Cruelty is it to break the Hearts of those from whom you had your Being, and who were tender of you when you could not help your selves? and if after all this you prove worse than Brutates, and become the Grief of their Souls that thus bred, and loved, and nourished you, do you think God will not at last make this far sadder to you than ever it was to them? If Cruelty to an Enemy, much more to a Stranger, to a Neighbour, to a Friend, be so hateful to the God of Love, that it goeth not unrevenge'd, O what will unnatural Cruelty to Parents bring upon you? Yea, even in this Life; as honouring Father and Mother hath a special Promise of Prosperity and long Life, so dishonouring and grieving Parents is usually punished with some notable Calamity, as a Fore-runner of the great Revenge hereafter.

And you cannot but perceive that such as live in Sensuality, and Lust, and Wickedness, are the great Troublers of Church and State: God himself hath said it, *There is no Peace to the Wicked, Isa. 48. 52. and 57. 21. For the Wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose*

Waters

Waters cast up Mire and Dirt : There is no Peace, saith my God, to the Wicked, v. 22. Isa. 59. 8. The Way of Peace they know not ; there is no Judgment in their Goings : They have made them crooked Paths ; whosoever goeth therein shall not know Peace. They give no Peace to others, and God will deny Peace to themselves ; yea, the Nature of their own Sin denieth it them, as broken Bones, and griping Sickness, deny Ease to the Body. And can you think you shall become the Shame of the Church, and the Troublers of the Land, and that God will not trouble you for it ? If you will be Enemies of God and your Country you will prove the sorest Enemies to yourselves.

And who is the Gainer by all this ? No One in the World ; unless you will call it the Devil's Gain, to have his malicious, cruel Will fulfilled : And sure the pleasing the Devil, and a fleshly Lust, Fancy or Appetite, can never compensate all your Losses, nor comfort you under the Sufferings which you wilfully bring upon your selves.

The Reason I thus deal with you by Way of Question is, that I may, if possible, engage your own Thoughts in

answering them, for I find most are apt-
 est to learn of themselves: And indeed
 without your selves, and your own seri-
 ous Thoughts, we cannot help you to
 true Understanding. If you will but
 now take these Twenty Questions in se-
 cret into your serious Thoughts, and con-
 sider of them till you can give them such
 an Answer as Reason should allow, and as
 you will stand to before God, when the
 Mouth of all Iniquity shall be stopp'd, I
 should not doubt but you will reap the
 Benefit.

O what should a Man do that pi-
 tieth blind and wilful Sinners to make
 them willing of their own Recovery?
 Here all stops; and must it stop at this?
 Are you not willing? And will you not
 so much as consider of the Reasons that
 should make you willing, when Heaven
 or Hell must be the Consequence? O
 what a Thing is a blind Mind, and a dead
 and hardened Heart! What a befooling
 Thing is fleshly Lust? O what need
 had Mankind of a Saviour! And what
 need have all of a Sanctifier, and of his
 Holy Word, and of all the Holy
 Means of Grace!

Poor

Poor Sinners! O let not your Teachers and your Parents Counsel and Tears be brought in as Witnesses against you to your Condemnation! O add not this to all their Griefs, that their Counsel and their Sorrows must sink you deeper into Hell! Alas, it were sadness enough to them to see that it is all in vain! Let not this Counsel of mine to you be rejected to the encrease of your Guilt and Misery. Mercy is yet offered you: The Day of Grace is not yet past: God is not unwilling to receive you: Christ is not unwilling to be your Saviour, if you consent: No Difficulty in the World maketh us afraid of your Damnation, but your own foolish Choice and wicked Wills. Our Care is not to make God Merciful, nor to make Christ's Merits and Sacrifice Sufficient, nor to get God to promise you Pardon, if you repent, and come to him by Christ; all this is done already: But that which is undone is to make you considerate, and truly willing, and to live as those that indeed are willing to let go the poisonous Pleasures of Sin, and to take God and Heaven for your Hope and Portion, and to be saved and ruled by Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, and to receive his daily Help and Mercies to this

End,

End, in the Use of his appointed Means,
 and without this you are undone for ever.
 And is there any Hurt in all this? If there
 were, is it worse than the Filth of Sin,
 and the Plagues that follow here and for
 ever! Worthy is he to bear at last, *De-*
part from me thou Worker of Iniquity,
 and to be thrust away from the Hopes of
 Heaven, that after all that can be said
 and done chuseth Sin as more desirable
 than this God, this Saviour, this Sancti-
 fier, and this Glory.

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End,

C H A P. VIII.

General Directions to the Willing.

THough the Blindness and Obstinacy of fleshly Sinners too oft frustrate great Endeavours, yet we may well hope that the Prayers and Tears of Parents, and the Calls of God, may prevail with many, and I may hope that some that have read what is before written will say, *We are willing to hear and learn that we may be saved: Tell us what it is that we must do:* And on that Hope I shall give such miscarrying Youth some General Advice, and some Counsel, about their Particular Cases, and all as briefly as I may. O that the Lord would make you that read this truly willing to pursue these Ten Directions following! How happy yet may you be!

I. Set your Understandings seriously and diligently to the Work which they are made for, and consider well what is your Interest and your Duty, till you come to

a fixed Resolution, what is for your Good, and what is for your Hurt, and what that Good or Hurt will be.]

Should it be a hard Thing to perswade
 a Man in his Wits to *love himself*, and
 to think what is good or hurtful to him-
 self, especially for Everlasting? Why are
 you Men if you will live like Dogs?
 What do you with Understandings if you
 will not use them? What will you use
 them for if not for your own Good, and
 to avoid Misery? What Good will you
 desire if not Everlasting Joy and Glory?
 And what Hurt will you avoid if not
 Hell-fire? Have you Reason, and can you
 live as if these were not worth the think-
 ing on? Will you bestow your Thoughts
 all the Day and Year upon you know not
 what, nor why, and not one Hour sober-
 ly as I think of such Important Things as
 these? O Sirs! Will you go out of the
 World before you well think whither you
 must go? Will you appear before the
 Judge of Souls, to give up your great
 account, before you think of it, and how it
 must be done? Is he worthy of the Help
 of *Grace* that will not use his natural
reason? I beg it of you, as ever you care
 what becomes of you for ever, that you

will some Time alone set yourselves for one Hour seriously to think; [who made you, and why; what you owe him; how much you depend on him; what you have done against him; how you have spent your Time; what Case your Souls are in; what Christ hath done for you; and what he is or would be to you whether you are sanctified and forgiven; what God's Spirit must do for you; and what you must be and do if you will be saved; and if it be otherwise, whither it is that you must go.

II. Therefore I next advise you, and treat you, that you live not as at a great Distance from Eternity, nor foolishly flatter your selves with the deceitful Promise of long Life: And were it sure to be a Hundred Years, remember how quickly and certainly they will end. O! Time is nothing, therefore think of nothing in this World as separated from the World to come. Whatever you are doing, or saying, or thinking, the Boat is hastening to the Gulf; you are posting to Death and Judgment: Which Way ever you go by Wealth or Poverty, Health or Sickness, Busy or Idle, Single or Married, you are going still to the Grave and

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ternity. Judge then of every Thing as
 tendeth to that End: And think of no-
 thing as not related as a Means to the
 Near and Everlasting End: O chuse and
 do that which Reason and Conscience tel-
 leth you that you will at last earnestly
 wish that you had chosen and done; when
 you are tempted to be prayerless, and a-
 verse to Good, or to run to Lust, or sinful
 pleasure, ask your selves seriously how
 will this look in the final Review? What
 shall I think of this at Last? Will it be
 my Comfort, or my Torment? O judge as
 you will judge at last.

III. My Third Counsel is, If your
 Consciences tell you that you have fool-
 ishly sinned against God and your Salva-
 tion, make not light of it, but present-
 ly and openly go to your Parents or
 Masters, and penitently confess your sin-
 ful Life in general, and your known or
 open Sins particularly: But such Secret
 Sins which wronged not them, and will
 blast your Reputation, you are not bound
 to confess openly, unless the *Ease* or *Fu-
 ture Direction* of your doubtful and trou-
 bled Consciences require it: But when
 your vicious, fleshly, Life is known, excuse
 it not; hide not the Evil by Lies or Exte-
 nuation;

nuation; when you have wrong'd your Parents or Masters by Disobedience, and by robbing them of Part of your Time and Service, if not also of their Money or Goods, go to them with Sorrow and Shame, and confess how foolishly you have served the Flesh to the Injury of them, to the Offending of God, and to the unspeakable Hurt of your own Souls: Lament your Sin, and ask them Forgiveness, and entreat their Prayers and their careful Government of you for the Time to come, and sincerely promise them Reformation and Obedience.

Yea, if you have had familiar Companions in your Sin, go to them, and tell them, *[God and Reason hath convinced me of my sinful Folly, that for brutish, fleshly, Pleasure, have wilfully broken the Laws of my Creator and Redeemer, and for nothing undone and lost my Soul, if Christ do not recover me by sound Repentance. O how madly have we despised our Salvation! How easily might we have known, had we but search'd and consider'd the Word of God, that we were displeasing God, undoing ourselves, and making Work for future Sorrows? Should I, when I knew this, and when I knew that I am*

going

your going to Death and Judgment, yet obsti-
 nately go on, and be a harden'd Rebel
 against Christ and Grace? What can I ex-
 pect but to be forsaken of God, and lost
 for ever? O therefore as we have sinned
 together, let us repent together! You
 have been a Snare to me, and I to you:
 We have been Agents of the Devil to draw
 each other to Sin and Misery: Certainly
 all this must sooner or later be repented
 of. O let us join together in Sorrow, and
 Reformation, and a Holy, Obedient, Life.
 If you will not consent I here declare to
 you before God, (for I know that he seeth
 and heareth me,) that I will be your Com-
 panion in Sin no more: I beg Pardon for
 tempting you: I resolve by God's Grace
 to prefer my Salvation and my Obedience
 to God before a base and beastly Plea-
 sure: Whatever you say against it I will
 never more forsake my Salvation to follow
 you, nor ever take you to be wiser than
 God, nor better Friends to me than my
 Saviour, nor your Words more regardable
 than God's Word, nor a Whore, or a Mer-
 ry Cup, or Vanity, to be better than
 Heaven, nor Temperance and Holiness to
 be worse than Hell. If you will not be
 undeceived with me I will pray for you;
 but I renounce your sinful Company, and
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my Warning will be a Witness against you to your Confusion.

Stick nor at the Scorn of Fools, not at the Shame of such Repentance and Confession: It may Profit others; but however, it is no more than in Hope you owe them whom you have wronged and endangered by Sin: And it will lay some new Obligation on your selves to amend, by doing what you have so professed: And sure Conscience and Shame will somewhat the more hinder you from evermore joining with them in the Sin which you have so bewailed and renounced. And think not this too much, for there is no Jestings with God, and with Everlasting Joy or Misery.

IV. My next Counsel is, *Presently, Understandingly, and Considerately, renew the Covenant which you made in Baptism with God, your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.*

Consider whether to be a Christian is not necessary to your Salvation; and then consider what it is to be a Christian; and whether it be not a far higher Thing than merely to take that Name upon you,

you, and be of that Party, and to join
 with the Right Church, and to have the
 bare Words and Picture of Believers:
 And then consider whether God will be
 mocked with Shews, and Ceremonies,
 and dead Formalities, and false Professi-
 ons; and whether the lifeless Carcass or
 Image of Christianity will be taken by
 God instead of the Life and Power of it,
 and will ever save a Soul. Yea, whe-
 ther a False, Counterfeit, Christian, Bred
 up under Christian Instructions and Exam-
 ples, do not make your Guilt far greater,
 and your Case more miserable, than *Ame-
 ricans* or *Indians*, that never heard what
 you have heard: And when perhaps you
 have spoken against Hypocrites your-
 selves, whether there be any more Noto-
 rious Hypocrites than such as you, who
 say you are Christians, and yet live to
 the Flesh in the odious Sins which Christ
 abhorreth: Think what a dreadful Thing
 it is to profess a Religion which condemn-
 eth you; and to say over that Creed
 which you believe not, and those Petiti-
 ons in the Lord's-Prayer which you de-
 sire not, and those Commandments which
 you break, and will condemn you: To
 rebel against God while you say you be-
 lieve in him: To despise Christ's Go-
 vernment

vernment while you say you trust him for Salvation: To ask for his Grace when you would not have it to sanctifie you, and save you from your Sin: To beg Mercy of God, and to reject this Mercy, and to have no Mercy on yourselves. O think what a doleful Case it is to see distracted Sinners, such Hypocrites, playing with such Contradictions, so near God's Bar, and in his Sight: And to make no better use of Prayers, and the Name of Christians, and the Profession of the Truth, than to give the Devil more Matter to accuse you, and Conscience to torment you, and a Righteous God to say to you at last, *Out of thy own Mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked Rebel.* Didst thou not confess that Jesus was the Christ, and that thou didst believe the Gospel, and the Life to come, and yet didst live in the wilful Disobeying of Christ and the Gospel, and base Contempt of God and thy Salvation?

And when you have consider'd the sad Case of Hypocrites, that call themselves Christians to their own Condemnation, when they are none such, then think seriously what the Covenant was which was made for you in your Baptism, and you

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you have taken on you to own. Think what it is devotedly to trust to God as your reconciled Father, and devotedly to trust to Christ as your Saviour, your great Teacher, Governour, and Mediator with the Father; what it is devotedly to trust the Holy Spirit to illuminate, sanctifie, and quicken, you in a Holy Life, and to strengthen and comfort you against and under all your Trials. Consider what it is to take the *Flesh*, the *World*, and the *Devil*, as they are against this Holy Life and Heavenly Hope, for your Enemies, and to list yourselves under Christ in a vowed War to the Death against them. Think how you have perfidiously broken this Covenant, on which all the Hope of your Salvation lyeth. And then if you dare not utterly renounce all that Hope, presently and resolvedly renew this Covenant. Lament your Violation of it to God: Do it not only in a Passion, but upon serious Consideration, make that Choice and Resolution which you dare stand to at a dying Hour, and on which you may believe that God for Christ's Sake will accept you, and forgive you. O think what a Mercy it is to have a Saviour, who after all your heinous Sins will bring you reconciled as Sons to God, for
the

the Merits of his Sacrifice and Righteousness, and by his powerful Intercession, and will send from Heaven the Spirit of God into your Hearts, to renew those Blind, Dead, Carnal, Minds to God's Holy Image, and will dwell in you, and carry on your Sanctification to the End. Thankfully and Joyfully accept this Covenant and Grace, and again give up yourselves to God, your Father, Saviour and Sanctifier; but be sure that you do it *Absolutely*, without deceitful Exceptions and Reserves; and that you do it Resolvedly, and not only in a Frightned Mood; and yet that you do it as in the Strength of the Grace of Christ, not trusting the Steadfastness of your own deceitful, mutable, Hearts. And when you can truly say that you unfeignedly consent, and renew this Covenant in your Hearts, then go the next Opportunity to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and there penitently and faithfully renew it openly in the solemn Way that Christ hath appointed you; thankfully profess your Trust in Christ, and receive a sealed Pardon of your Sins, and Title to Everlasting Life; and settle your Conversation in the Communion of Saints, as you Hope to live with such for ever.

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V. Henceforward set yourselves as the true Scholars of Christ, to learn his Doctrine, and as his true Subjects, to know his Laws, and as those that trust their Souls into his Hand, to understand, and firmly believe, his Promises for this Life, and that which is to come : And as the Blessed Man, *Psalms* 1. 2, 3. *To delight in the Law of the Lord, and meditate in it Day and Night.* As you were wont to steal some Hours from God and your Masters to go to the House of Sin and Death, so now get such Hours as lawfully you can from your other Employments and Diversions ; but especially on the Lord's-Day ; and get alone, and beg Mercy and Grace from God, and set your selves to read the Bible, and with it read some Catechisms, and some sound and serious Treatises of Divinity, which are most suitable to your State.

Great Store of all Sorts of good Books through the great Mercy of God are common among us : He that cannot Buy may Borrow.

But take heed that you lose not your Time in reading Romances, Play-books, vain

vain Jests, or seducing or reviling Disputes, or needless Controversies.

This Course of Reading Scripture and good Books will be many Ways to your great Advantage.

1. It will above all other Ways encrease your Knowledge.
2. It will help your Resolutions and Holy Affections, and direct your Lives.
3. It will make your Lives pleasant; the Knowledge, the Usefulness, the Variety, will be a continual Recreation to you, unless you are utterly besotted or debauch'd.
4. The Pleasure of this will turn you from your Filthy, Fleshly, Pleasure. You will have no need to go for Delight to a Play-house, a Drinking-house, or to Beastly Lusts.
5. It will keep you from the sinful Loss of Time, by Idleness, or unprofitable Employment or Pastimes. You will cast away Cards and Dice when you find the Sweetness of useful Learning.

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But be sure that you chuse the most
useful and necessary Subjects, and that
you seek Knowledge for the Love of Ho-
liness and Obedience.

VI. The Sixth Part of my Advice is,
*Forsake ill Company, and converse with
such as will be Helps to your Knowledge,
Holiness, and Obedience, and not such as
will draw you to Sin and Misery.*

You have found by sad Experience
what Power ill Company hath on Fools?
With such a merry Tale, a Laughter, a
Jest, a Scorn, a merry Cup, and a bad
Example and Perswasion, doth more than
Reason, or God's Authority, or the Love
of their Souls. A Physician may go a-
mong the Sick and Mad to Cure them,
and a Wise Man that seeth these will pi-
ty them, and hate Sin the more. But
what do you do there where you have
already catch'd the Infection of their Dis-
ease? The Mind of a Man is known
much by the Company which he chu-
seth; and if you chuse ill no wonder if
you speed ill, *Prov. 13. 20 He that walk-
eth with Wise Men shall be Wise, but a
Companion of Fools shall be destroyed,*
Prov.

Prov. 28. 7. *Whoso keepeth the Law is a Wise Son, but he that is a Companion of riotous Men shameth his Father,* Psalm 119. 63. *David saith, I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts.* 26. 4, 5. *I have not sate with vain Persons, neither will I go in with Dissemblers; I have hated the Congregation of Evil-doers, and will not sit with the Wicked.* 119. 115. *Depart from me ye Evil-doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God.*

VII. Especially be sure that you run not wilfully upon Temptation, but keep as far from every tempting Bait and Object as you can. Fire and Gunpowder, or Straw, must be kept at a sufficient distance; no Man is long safe at the very Brink of Danger, especially if it be his own Choice, and more especially if it be a Sin that his Nature is much inclin'd to. No Wise Man will trust corrupted Nature very far, especially where he hath often faln already. The best Man that is should live in Fear when an enticing Bait of Sin is near him. If David that prayed, *turn away mine Eyes from beholding Vanity*, had better practised it, O what heinous Sin had he escaped ! Had he made a Cove-

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stant with his Eyes, as *Job* did, what Wounds had he prevented! But when tempting Meat and Drink are before you, and the tempting Person hath secret Familiarity with you, and tempting or provoking Words are at your Ears, then alas many have need of more Grace, Resolution, and Mortification, than they have.

If you knew well what Sin is, and what is the Consequence, you would be more watchful and resolved against Temptations than against Thieves, or Fire, or the Places infected by the Plague.

VIII. *Make it the chief Study of your Lives to understand what Man's Everlasting Hope is, and to get a lively, well-settled, Belief of it; and to bring your Souls to take it joyfully for your true Felicity and End, and thence daily to fetch the powerful Motives of your Duty, and your Patience, and your contending Comfort in Life, and at your Death.*

The *End* is the *Life* of all the Means. If Heavenly Blessedness be not the chief *End* that you live, hope, and labour for, in the World, your whole Lives will be but Carnal,

Carnal, Vain, and the Way to Misery? For the *Means* can be no better than the *End*. God that is the Beginning is our *End*; we are made and govern'd by him, and for him. Heavenly Glory is the Sight of his Glory, and the Everlasting Perfection and Pleasure of Joyful, Mutual, Love.

But we are not the Noblest Creatures, next to God in Excellency and Desert; yea, we are Sinners, who have deserved to be cast from his Love. And therefore as in the Way we must *come to him* by a Saviour, so at the Blessed End we must *enjoy him* by a Mediator. And to see God's Glory in Christ, and the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, the Blessed Society of Saints and Angels, continually flaming in Love, Joy, and Praises, to the most Holy God; this, this is the Felicity for which we labour, suffer, and hope.

2. And O how great and how needful a Work it is to search, study, and pray, for so firm a Belief of this unseen Glory, as may so resolve, engage, and comfort, us in some good Measure, as if we had seen it with these Eyes? O what Men would one Hour's being in Heaven make us? Or one clear Sight of it? Faith hath

hath a greater Work to do than a Dream-
 ing or Dead Opinion can perform. If it
 be not well grounded first, and well ex-
 exercised upon God's Love, Promise, and
 Glory, from Day to Day, you will find
 Cause (sadly) to lament the Weakness of
 it. For this Use you have great Need of
 the Help of such Books as open clearly
 the evident Proofs of the Christian Verity,
 which I have briefly done in the Beginning
 of the Second Part of my *Life of Faith*, and
 more largely in Two other Books, *viz.*
The Unreasonableness of Infidelity, and the
Reasons of the Christian Religion. A firm
 Belief of the World to come is it that
 must make us Serious Christians, and over-
 come the Snares of Worldly Vanity.

And your Faith being well settled, set
 yourselves daily to *use it, and live by it*,
 dwell in the joyful Hopes of the Heavenly
 Glory. What is a Man that liveth not in
 the Use of *Reason*? And you must know
 that you have as daily Use for your *Faith*,
 as for your *Reason*. Without Reason you
 can neither safely eat or drink, nor con-
 verse with Man as a Man, but as *Bedlam*,
 nor do any Business that concerneth you;
 and therefore you must live by your *Rea-*
son. And without *Faith* you cannot
 please

please God, nor obtain Salvation, no, nor use your Reason for any Thing higher than to serve your Appetites, and purvey for the Flesh; and therefore you must live by Faith, or live like Beasts, and worse than Beasts, and cannot otherwise live to God, nor live in the Hopes of Blessedness hereafter. O! Consider that the Difference between living chiefly upon and for an Earthly or Fleshly Felicity, or a Heavenly, is the great Difference between the Holy, and the Unholy, and the Foregoer of the Difference between those in Heaven, and those in Hell.

IX. Still remember that the *great Means* of all the Good that here or hereafter you can expect, is the *Great Mediator, the Great Teacher, Ruler, and Intercessor*, for his People; and therefore out of him you can do nothing. All Duty that you offer to God must be by his Mediation, and so must all Mercy which you receive from God. To come to God by him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, must be your daily Work of Faith. His Blood must wash you from all Sin past, and from the Guilt of daily Failings and Infirmities. None but he can effectually Teach you to know God and

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and your selves, your Duty, and your Everlasting Hopes. None but he can render your Persons, Praises and Actions, acceptable to God, because you are Sinners, and unmeet for God's Acceptance without a Mediator. All Power in Heaven and Earth is given him, and your Lives and Souls are at his Will; and it is he that must judge you, and with whom you hope to live in Glory. Therefore you must so live by the Faith of the Son of God, who hath loved you, and gave himself for you, that you may say it is he that liveth in you, *Gal. 2. 20, 21.* This is the Fountain from whence you must daily fetch your Strength and Comfort.

X. And still remember that it is by the *Operation* of the Holy Spirit that the Father and the Son do Sanctifie Souls, and Regenerate and Breed them up for Glory. It is by the Holy Ghost that God dwelleth in us by Love, and Christ by Faith. Therefore see that you rest not in corrupted Nature, and trust not to your Selves, or to the Flesh. Your Souls are Dead to God and Holiness, and your Duties Dead, till the Spirit of Christ do Quicken them. You are *Blind* to God and Man in Sin, till the Spirit Illuminate you, and give you

you Understanding. You are like Enemies, out of Love with God, Heaven, and Holiness, till this Spirit reconcile you, and sanctifie your Wills. You will have no Manlike Spiritual Holy Pleasure till the Holy Spirit renew your Hearts, and make them fit to delight in God. O that Men knew the great Necessity of the illuminating, quickning, sanctifying, comforting, Influence of the Spirit of God, how far would they be from deriding it, as some prophane ones do? By this Holy Spirit the Sacred Records were written, and by Miracles of Christ and his Apostles, and Evangelists and Prophets, sealed and delivered to the Churches. And by this Spirit the Orders and Government of the Church were settled. And by him we are enlighten'd to understand the Scriptures, and enclin'd to love them, and delightfully believe them, and obey them. Study therefore obediently these Writings of the Holy Ghost, and confidently trust them. O! Be not found among the Resisters or Neglecters of the Spirit's Help and Motions, when proud Self confidence or fleshly Lusts do rise against them.

Christ's Bodily Presence is taken from the Earth; he promised instead of it
(which

(which was but in one Place at once) to send his Spirit, which is to the Soul more than the Sun-light to the Eye, and can shine in all the World at once. This is his Agent on Earth, by whom (in Teachers and Learners) he carrieth on his Saving Work. This is his Advocate who pleadeth his Cause effectually against Unbelief, and Fleshly Lusts, and Worldly Wisdom. This is the Well of Living Water, springing up in us to Everlasting Life; the Name, the Mark of God on Souls, the Divine Regenerator, the Author of God's Holy Image, and the Divine Nature, even Divine Life, and Light, and Love, the Conqueror of the World and Flesh, the Strengthener of the Weak, the Confirmer of the Wavering, the Comforter of the Sad, and the Pledge, Earnest and First-fruits, of Everlasting Life. O therefore pray earnestly for the Spirit of Grace, and carefully obey him, and joyfully praise God in the Sense of his Holy Encouragement and Help.

F I N I S.

